



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS OCTOBER AS DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH**

### *EVENTS SCHEDULED THROUGHOUT THE MONTH*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Governor Phil Bredesen has issued a proclamation designating October as the month to generate awareness about the talents and abilities of Tennessee's citizens with disabilities.

"You're Hired! Success Knows No Limitations" is the theme of the 2004 National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The theme refers to the goal of removing barriers to employment so that all Tennesseans are judged on their abilities and given opportunities to contribute to the workforce.

"Employment is critical for economic and social independence for everyone, especially persons with disabilities," said Governor Bredesen. "The state is committed to hiring talented individuals, including those who happen to have disabilities. We must all work together to remove barriers to employment for these Tennesseans."

The Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) provides services to Tennesseans with disabilities. More than 40,000 Tennesseans received Vocational Rehabilitation services during the last fiscal year. These services include diagnosis, treatment, training, counseling, job placement assistance, and post-employment services. Approximately 3,500 individuals gained employment after completing DRS programs during fiscal year 2003-04.

"The existing partnerships among the disability community, businesses, labor unions and government are a firm foundation for success," Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge said. "Persons with disabilities have the vision, skills, initiative and perseverance to make significant contributions."

Seventeen Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers located in rural communities throughout the state and the residential comprehensive Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna provide additional services.

The Tennessee Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities and DRS staff are working with businesses and agencies across Tennessee on activities recognizing Disability Employment Awareness Month. Attached is a partial list of scheduled events.

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CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR  
400 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TN 37248  
615.313.4700

## **DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH SCHEDULE**

<b>October 1</b>	Franklin County Proclamation Official Kick-Off for Activities, Franklin County Courthouse Contact: Debra Riddle (931) 962-1162	Winchester
<b>October 9</b>	Disability Awareness Month Gold Scramble Contact: Debbie Michael (931) 723-5070	Manchester Willowbrook Golf Course
<b>October 12</b>	Disability Awareness Day Career Expo Pellissippi State Technical Community College Hardin Valley Campus, Goins Student Lounge Contact: Cynthia Andresen (865) 539-7249	Knoxville
<b>October 19</b>	Area Recognition Awards Luncheon Southeast TN Placement Consortium The Convention and Trade Center Contact: Carol Martin (423) 634-6725	Chattanooga
<b>October 20</b>	Area Disability Awareness Breakfast Business and Community Organizations Sponsored Contact: Tina Jones (865) 594-6720, ext 1105	Knoxville
<b>October 20</b>	Disability Mentoring Day Contact: Trish Farmer (615) 313-4907	Statewide Recognition
<b>October 27</b>	TRC Disability Awareness Day Contact: Gale Demick (615) 459-6811, ext. 246	Smyrna TN Rehabilitation Center
<b>October 28</b>	Area Recognition Awards Luncheon Contact: Alma Ruth Michael (731) 286-8313	Dyersburg TN Rehabilitation Center
<b>October 29</b>	Community TRC Open House Contact: Cindy Miles (931) 648-5560	Clarksville TN Rehabilitation Center